RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 29th February, 2000/10 Phalguna, 1921 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock; **Mr. Chairman** *in the chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Construction of Jaleswar-Chandaneswar Road with world Bank Aid

*61 DR. M.N. DAS: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank has undertaken the construction of a 30 km. road from Jaleswar to Chandaneswar in Orissa for which there has been constant popular demand for years; and

(b) if so, by when the construction work is likely to begin?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

DR. M.N. DAS: Sir, with a clear conscience and in total confidence let me say, with due apology, that the hon. Minister has not consulted the papers in regard to this or has not taken into confidence the concerned officers or has not called for the information from the Government of Orissa.

We have been told a number of times that work on the road from Jaleswar to Chandaneswar will begin from the coming September, 2000. As I wanted to spend money out of my MPLADS funds to repair the road, I was warned by the Administration of Orissa that no renovation work and no repair work could be undertaken because already the World Bank project was to start from September this year. I do not know whether the Government has obtained the papers in regard to all these things. That, of course, is a different issue.

Sir, there may be hundreds of stretched of 30 kilometre road which are in a very poor condition, but the reason why I am referring to this particular road is this. My esteemed friends to my left coming from West Bengal and belonging to different parties know a place named Digha. They must have visited Digha sevral times, which the late lamented Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the first Congress Chief Minister of West Bengal, made into a health resort. It is on a beach on the Bay of Bengal. Every day, thousands of tourists go there. It is a thriving centre of tourism. Within one to two kilometers from Digha is the Orissa Border and thousands of tourists, who go to Digha, make it a point to cover just half-a-kilometre inside Orissa to go to a place of pilgrimage named Chandaneswar. That is another thing. But my point is that, hundreds of heavily loaded trucks start from Calcutta every day to come to Digha because the road is very good from Calcutta to Digha. They enter into Orissa and come to Chandaneswar. From there they take the only rural road to Jaleswar. Sir, heavily loaded trucks constantly passing through that stretch day and night in hundreds are making the road totally impassable for the movement of vehicles. Local buses cannot ply. There are big holes and craters. As a result, the vehicles get badly damaged. That is why the people have been constantly demanding for a good State highway. I have been told by the Government of Orissa that the World Bank has already sanctioned Rs. 9½ crores to construct that 30-kilometre stretch. There is a constant pressure on me that as a Member of Parliament, I should spend money on it from out of the MPLADS to get the road repaired. But when I asked the Collector of my district, Balasore, to spend Rs. 50 lakhs from out of the MPLADS funds for the repair of the road so that at least the cyclists can cross that stretch of road and also the local buses can ply, I was told that since the World Bank work would begin in September 2000, no renovation or repair work could be undertaken from out of the MPLADS funds or from any other source, not even from the funds of the Public Works Department of the Government of Orissa.

Now, how does the hon. Minister say that there is no such project and the question does not arise? Sir, if I am permitted, in due course

of time, I will produce before the hon. Minister, with his kind permission the appropriate papers from my Government showing that the World Bank has sanctioned Rs. 9/- crores for that 30 kilometre stretch of road.

श्री राजनाथ सिंह: सभापति महोदय, मेरे उत्तर से माननीय सदस्य को निराश होना पड़ा है। लेकिन मैं उन्हें जानकारी देना चाहता हूं कि वर्ल्ड बैंक कुछ स्टेट रोड्स प्रोजेक्ट्स को लोन देने के लिए राजी हो गई है। जिस स्ट्रेच की उन्होंने चर्चा की है जालेश्वर से चन्दनेश्वर तक की वह 30 किलो मीटर नहीं, बल्कि 36 किलोमीटर है। वह उड़ीसा की मेजर डिस्ट्रिक्ट रोड है। वर्ल्ड बैंक ने एक एग्रीमेंट स्टेट के साथ किया है। लेकिन वह जो एग्रीमेंट हुआ है वह केवल टेक्नीकल एसिसटैंस के लिए हुआ है। टेक्नीकल एसिसटैंस का मतलब यह समझा जाना चाहिए कि ओनली फॉर कंसलटैंसी सर्विसेस के लिए यह एग्रीमेंट हुआ है और यह एग्रीमेंट केवल इसी स्ट्रेच के लिए नहीं हुआ है बल्कि अन्य 12-13 ऐसे राज्य हैं जहां पर स्टेट रोड्स प्रोजेक्ट्स को लोन देने के लिए वह राजी हो गया है और सबके लिए उन्होंने एक एग्रीमेंट साइन किया है। वह एग्रीमेंट 51.5 मिलियन डालर का है। अभी तक किसी प्रकार का नेगोसिएशन वर्ल्ड बैंक से लोन के लिए नहीं हुआ है। जहां तक स्टेट रोड्स प्रोजेक्ट्स का सवाल है, इसके डेवलपमेंट अथवा मेंटीनेंस की जिम्मेदारी सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट की नहीं होती है। हां, यह सच है कि वर्ल्ड बैंक से जब कभी भी कोई स्टेट गवर्नमेंट लोन लेती है तो उनको सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट की फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री और डिपार्टमैंट ऑफ इकनोमिक अफेयर्स के थ्रू जाना पड़ता है।

DR. M.N. DAS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to have one information from the hon. Minister. Is he aware of the fact that if a road from Jaleswar to Chandanesar, a stretch of only 30 KMs, is constructed, the heavy vehicular traffic from Calcutta towards the far South, passing through Orissa on National Highway will be reduced by a distance of 170 KMs? The National Highway from Calcutta to Chennai runs through a circuitous route, touching the Bihar border and entering Balasore, Orissa. If this stretch of 30 KMs road is constructed, the distance could be shortened by 170 Kms. Is the Government aware of that fact? Why is the Government not giving priority to the construction of this road? That is my humble submission.

श्री राजनाथ सिंह: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय सदस्य से अनुरोध करता हूं कि वह हमें लिखित में जानकारी दे दें। मैं इस मामले को दिखवा लूंगा।